

## Message Text

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 01 MADRID 04079 252011Z  
ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-01 INR-07  
L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15  
USIA-06 MCT-01 /059 W  
-----260151Z 043538 /63  
R 251658Z MAY 77  
FM AMEMBASSY MADRID  
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 454  
INFO AMEMBASSY PARIS

CONFIDENTIAL MADRID 4079

E.O. 11652: GDS  
TAGS: PINT, SP  
SUBJECT: CONFUSED ETA SITUATION

1. SENSATIONALIST MADRID DAILY "DIARIO 16" TODAY BROKE THE STORY OF PREVIOUS GOS CONTACTS WITH THE BASQUE ETA TERRORIST GROUP.
2. CITING UNNAMED LEADERS OF THE ETA POLITICAL-MILITARY FACTION (ETA-P/M) "DIARIO 16" CLAIMED THAT CONTACTS BEGAN IN OCTOBER 1976, AND ACTUAL MEETINGS WITH GOVERNMENT REPS BEGAN IN "A EUROPEAN COUNTRY" IN NOVEMBER 1976. THE GOS REPORTEDLY SOUGHT A HALT TO TERRORISM, BUT OFFERED "NOTHING" IN RETURN, WHILE ETA LEADERS HELD OUT FOR TOTAL AMNESTY AND "POLITICAL LIBERTIES." A SECOND MEETING IN DECEMBER PROVED FRUITLESS, AS DID FINAL CONTACTS IN MARCH.
3. WHEN THE ETA COMMANDOS LEARNED THAT THEIR CHIEFS HAD BEEN IN CONTACT WITH THE GOS, A HARD-LINE FACTION ATTEMPTED TO EXPEL THE LEADERSHIP. IT IS NOW DOUBTFUL WHO COMMANDS THE ETA (P/M), BUT AT LEAST A SIZABLE FACTION IS NO LONGER CONTROLLED BY THE FORMER LEADERSHIP.

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4. THE RECENT KIDNAPPING OF JAVIER DE YBARRA IS ATTRIBUTED BY "DIARIO 16" TO THE EFFECTS OF THIS NEW ETA SPLIT. THEIR CONTACTS IN THE LEADERSHIP OF ETA (P/M) SPECIFICALLY DISCLAIM RESPONSIBILITY FOR THE ACTION, THROWING SUSPICION ON THE BREAD-AWAY FACTION.
5. THIS TRACKS WITH REPORTS REACHING AMCONSUL BILBAO THAT

SOME ETA "COMMANDO" GROUPS, FORMERLY BELONGING TO THE POLITICAL/MILITARY FACTION ARE NOW OUT OF CONTROL. THE GOS CONTACTS WITH THE POLITICAL/MILITARY FACTION AND THE EARLIER UNPUBLICIZED, TACIT TRUCE WITH THIS FACTION ACCOUNTED FOR THE INITIAL BELIEF THAT THIS FACTION MIGHT NOT HAVE BEEN INVOLVED IN THE RECENT VIOLENCE. AT ALL EVENTS, IT POINTS OUT THE DIFFICULTY OF DEALING WITH THE ETA PHENOMENON, NEVER IN RECENT YEARS A COHERENT SINGLE FORCE. STABLER

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NNN

## Message Attributes

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**Channel Indicators:** n/a  
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**Disposition Approved on Date:**  
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**Disposition Date:** 22 May 2009  
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**Review Markings:**  
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